

Pacific (S)HIELD

April - June 1996





Editor's note

Under Construction ...

A visit to either the district offices in the Honolulu Federal Building or to the base on Sand Island will show you the upheaval of ongoing change. There are walls being moved, carpet being sucked off of the floor and temporary working areas being rigged. All throughout the Coast Guard, change is the watchword.

A meander through these pages, however, will show no evidence of any type of upheaval. You'll see our people, "ops" normal, finding new ways to prevent search and rescue by working with the tourist submarine companies who provide entertaining undersea adventures in the Hawaiian Islands and Guam. These "Sub SAREXes" greatly increased awareness and understanding of procedures on both sides in case a rescue is necessary.

Coast Guard divers, Coast Guard whales, I think you'll find everything is as it should be in our world. There are, however, two incidents, quite unrelated, that if held together, not only set the tone for this issue, but which deeply affected many of our people. Regardless of the changes that surround us, those actions which are the heart and soul of our organization continue.

The first of these incidents is the fire on the fishing vessel Kathleen. While no boat fire is ordinary, the explosion and fire aboard Kathleen was extraordinary, lighting the early morning sky with flames that could be seen for miles.

By the time the media started paging me, it was 4:15 a.m. and there had already been two survivors pulled out of the water. While one of the rescued men had only minor injuries, the other's injuries were grave. He had second and third degree burns to more than 90 percent of his body. It was also determined that three men were missing and were probably still in the sleeping compartment of the burning boat.

While the search continued for the missing three in hope that somehow they had managed to get out of the boat, we continued to receive updates from the hospital on the condition of the burned man. The Cutter Sweetbrier vainly attempted to dewater the Kathleen so they could determine if the three crewmen were still on board. It sank before they could make that determination.

The next morning we got word from the hospital that the badly burned man had died from his injuries. Although many of us knew in our minds that terrible burns are difficult to survive, we wanted so badly for him to live. Later that night, I sat down to watch my favorite program, *E.R.*, and could hardly believe what I saw. A paramedic rescuing children from a burning building became trapped and ended up with second and third degree burns on more than 90 percent of his body. The entire show was a death watch for him because the doctors knew he couldn't survive. My reaction that evening drew a very concerned "What's the matter?" from my husband. From the mood at work the next day, I could tell I wasn't the only one who felt that way. Abject futility is not a fun place to be.

I think that is why the rescue of the two Navy chiefs a few days later was such an incredible event. They were in such a little boat and the weather had been so poor. But the mood around the district was that there was never a doubt that we'd find them in one of our search areas. Sure enough, later that morning, my chief burst into my office and said "We found 'em." What a whirlwind of elation surrounded the discovery that both of them were alive and well.

That case will keep me going for a long time.



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On The Front Cover

Front: *An Air Station Barbers Point helicopter hoists a rescue swimmer from a commercial submarine during training exercises off Waikiki Beach.*

See cover story page 3.

(photo by PA2 Scott Epperson)

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Underse

Story by Lt. Ben Cooper

Photos by PA2 Scott Epperson



Air



Above: A Barbers Point HH-65 helicopter flies toward a Voyager submarine off Waikiki beach

Inset: Submarine pilot talks to a diver during a rescue demonstration on the sea floor.

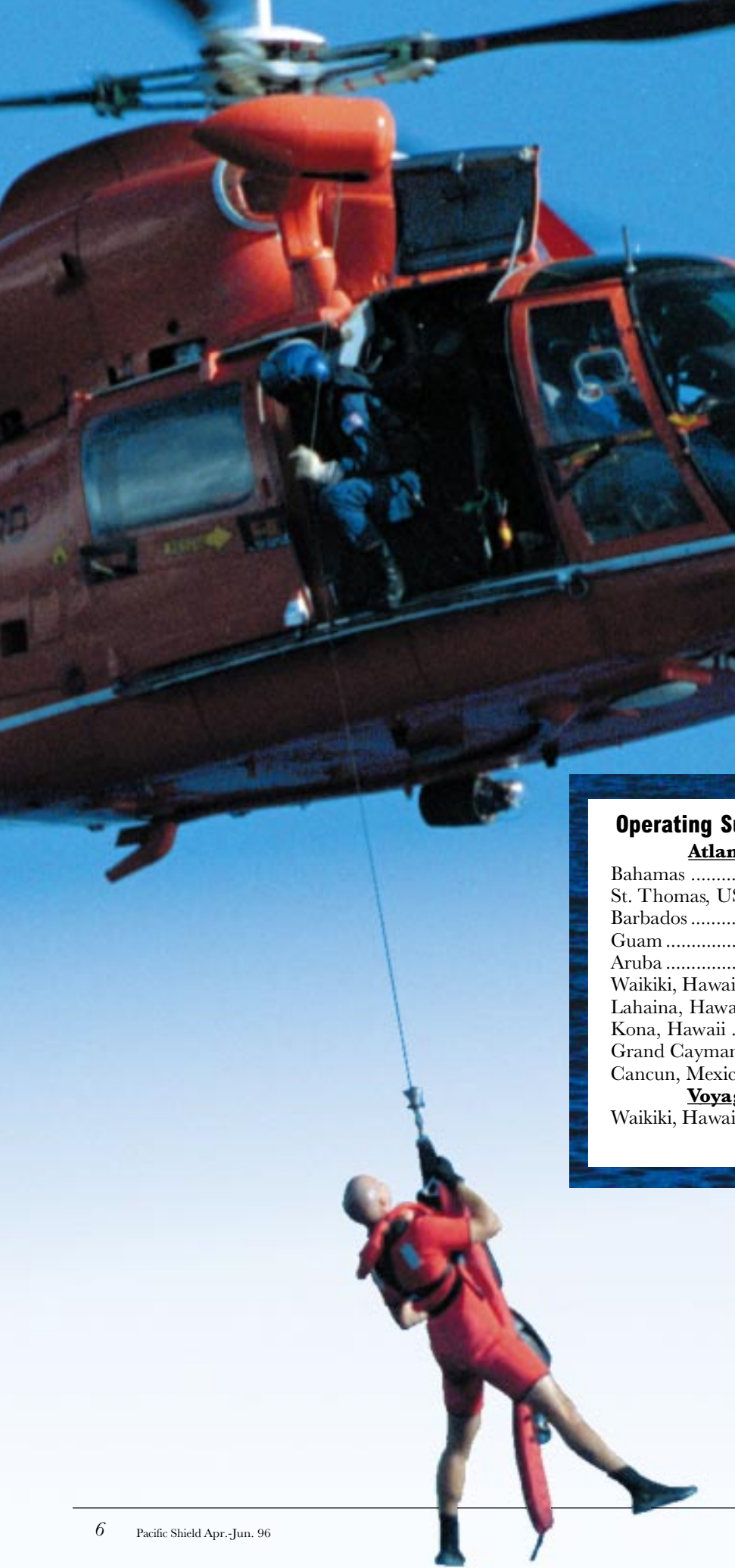
a

Every day Atlantis
Submarines and Voyager
Submarines of Hawaii offer
a unique experience for
passengers to view the
abundant underwater
marine life living in the
tropical waters of Hawaii.

Since 1994, Atlantis and Voyager Submarines have safely taken over 40,000 Oahu passengers under the sea to experience this memorable adventure. Currently, the only commercial submarines operating in U.S. waters are in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and throughout the 14th Coast Guard District in Oahu, Maui, Guam, and the Big Island of Hawaii.

All commercial submarines that operate in U.S. waters are inspected and certified for operation by Coast Guard inspectors. In Oahu, the commercial submarines have an excellent safety record. But what would happen if there was a submarine accident or if a passenger had a medical emergency and needed immediate treatment? How would the Coast Guard and the local marine community respond?

Rescues



An HH-65 Crewmember hoists ASM2 Keith Brannan from the deck of one of the participating submarines.

These were some of the questions the 14th Coast Guard District addressed when it sponsored a series of search and rescue exercises with Atlantis and Voyager Submarines and members of the local marine salvage community. The exercises were designed to help the Coast Guard and members of the local community develop a better understanding of each other, as well as review the equipment and procedures used for search and rescue. These exercises included helicopter hoist training off the deck of the submarines operating in Oahu, Maui, and the Big Island of Hawaii.

A commercial submarine emergency response workshop was held in November to bring together members from the 14th District, Group Honolulu and Marine Safety Office Honolulu, as well as representatives from the U. S. Navy, Atlantis and Voyager Submarines, and members of the local marine salvage community. The meeting

provided an opportunity for the participants to become familiar with one another, to discuss the assets and capabilities of the different organizations, as well as review the design and safety features of the subs.

This meeting was followed by a familiarization dive aboard an Atlantis submarine for all participants. The Atlantis crew demonstrated the safety and emergency systems of the sub during a dive off Waikiki Beach, Oahu. ASM2 Keith Brannan, a rescue swimmer

from Air Station Barbers Point and Cmdr. Dick Huwel, 14th District chief of search and rescue, demonstrated helicopter hoist and safety gear. This event was followed by a visit to a submarine in drydock and helicopter hoist training for the submarine crewmembers.

On Dec. 20, 1995, an HH-65 helicopter from Air Station Barbers Point conducted helicopter hoists with both tourist submarine companies off Oahu. It was a great success according to Brannan.

Operating Submarines

Atlantis

Bahamas	1
St. Thomas, USVI.....	1
Barbados	1
Guam	1
Aruba	1
Waikiki, Hawaii	3
Lahaina, Hawaii	1
Kona, Hawaii	1
Grand Cayman Island.....	1
Cancun, Mexico	1

Voyager

Waikiki, Hawaii	2
-----------------------	---



Left: A diver checks with the pilot of an Atlantis submarine during an emergency bottom-recovery demonstration off Waikiki Beach.

Bottom: ASM1 Robin N. Feske and Lt. Ben Cooper watch the crew of an Atlantis submarine use a Stokes litter during training off Maui.

“You couldn’t ask for a better training scenario” he said. Brannan trained the sub crews to receive the helicopter basket and place an injured person in it. Each sub crew practiced placing the rescue swimmer in a rescue basket and communicating with the helicopter hoist operator.

Based on the overwhelming success of the helicopter and submarine exercises in Oahu, similar training was scheduled with the Atlantis subs operating in Maui and the Big Island of Hawaii. In early February, Coast Guard helicopter crews conducted hoist training exercises with the Atlantis crews operating in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, and Lahaina, Maui. Coast Guard Auxiliary members and Station Maui personnel provided vital assistance by enforcing safety zones for the SAREX. According to ASM1 Robin N. Feske of Air Station Barber Point, who trained the Maui and Kailua-Kona submarine crews, “We hope we never need to do a helicopter evacuation from the subs, but if we do, these guys will be ready.”



Fire in the night

Story by PAC Chris Haley
Photos Courtesy of Cutter Sweetbrier

“I was concerned about the wounds. It was a shock, this was something I had never seen before. First aid became a priority. After a couple days had passed, I felt bad for not being able to find the missing people. I began to second guess myself ... was there anything better I could have done, or maybe something faster.”

... Seaman Apprentice Jared Bussard,
Station Honolulu



The smell of the sea mixed with the vapors of diesel fuel and filled their nostrils as their boat cut through the darkness, pounding across the 5-foot waves toward the fire that pierced the seamless black canvas like an errant brush out of control. Nearing the fire, about a mile from Honolulu International Airport, they could see that the deck of the boat was completely engulfed. If survivors were to be found, they would not be on the boat.

Eyes and spotlights turned to the water as the fire raged. BM3 Jason Hagen, coxswain, didn't want to get too close, worried about fuel tanks still left unburned. He brought his boat closer to the fishing vessel Kathleen, giving his crew the vantage point needed to find survivors.

As Hagen closed in, the intense heat radiating from the fire could be felt inside the cabin of the 41-foot utility boat. “I was on the windward side of the fire and the heat still made it in,” he said.

Seaman Apprentice Jared Bussard spotted arms stretching from the middle of a dozen fishing floats near the burning long-liner. Their heads barely visible, Arthur Muffly and Tae Hwan Kim were struggling to stay afloat. Struggling to stay alive.



The crew quickly threw lines into the floats. Several landed across Tae.

“We had lines draped over the top of him, but he wouldn’t grab on. I think he was scared to let go,” said Hagen. “I couldn’t see the other guy.”

While Tae hung on, Muffly, the ship’s captain, 49, of Kaneohe, prepared to let go. As the Coast Guard boat got within about 10 yards, he lunged forward and started to swim toward the rescue boat. Bussard, Seaman Apprentice Angela Luna and MK3 Burns Mollette met him in the stern of the utility boat, but couldn’t get him on board. Muffly was cut on the forehead and temple and bleeding badly. As the crew tried to help him into the boat their hands became drenched in blood.

A make-shift step was made out of a piece of line looped down into the water and Muffly was able to gain purchase and was helped into the boat. Additional injuries were very obvious as the crew laid a naked Muffly down in the weldeck of the 41-footer.

“He was talking and his eyes were open, but he had dark splotchy burns on his face and chest and he was real pale,” said Hagen. “The crew said Muffly was very cold and the burns and blood made it hard to pull him out of the water.”

Once Muffly was on board, the crew turned their attention back to Tae, 59, a Korean national, who was the ship’s fishing captain. The crew tried to get him to let go of the floats without success. Hagen radioed a rescue helicopter circling above and asked them to drop their rescue swimmer.

ASM3 Evangelos A. Litsas, who was lowered into the water said, “I swam to the boat and drifted back toward him.” The rescue swimmer couldn’t get Tae to let go of the floats. “I had to wrestle him out,” he said.

Litsas could feel the intense heat from the fire. “The boat was blazing. I had to push off the boat just to get clear. The whole thing went pretty fast,” he said. The rescue took less than five minutes but seemed like much longer to Litsas. Once both were back in the helo, Litsas noticed that his hair and body were covered with fuel.

With ocean temperatures averaging 78 degrees in February off Oahu, Hawaii, hypothermia was a concern. Blankets were brought and the crew of the 41-footer provided basic first aid, applying bandages to Muffly’s head and hands.

On the trip to shore, both survivors were asked if there were any other people on the boat, both answered “no.”

Above: The crew of a Station Honolulu 41-footer checks the remains of the Kathleen.

Far left: The burned-out hull of the Kathleen

“The whole night was scary, seeing the victim caused a sense of urgency to get him on board. When we were trying to get him on board I felt helpless because it was taking so long. Once the victim was on board and initial first aid was complete, I really thought he would survive.”

... Seaman
Apprentice Angie
Luna, Station
Honolulu



The 41-footer headed back to Station Honolulu at Sand Island and the HH-65 helicopter from Air Station Barbers Point flew to Honolulu International Airport, where ambulances were waiting. On the trip in, both Muffly and Tae said there were three others on board the boat. The search was on again.

The three other men on board were Faisamoa Jr., 39, of Waikiki, who joined the crew Feb. 11, the day the ship departed, just 10 days before the fire; Benson Yens, 33, who lived in Laie, Hawaii, but was from Micronesia; and William Myers, 41, who was from Hauula, Hawaii.

Muffly was put into a stokes litter and transferred to an ambulance at Sand

Island and taken to Straub Medical Center. Tae was taken by ambulance to Kuakini Medical Center.

The 41-footer returned to fight the fire, while the helicopter began searching. The Coast Guard Cutter Assateague searched the area and the State Marine Patrol searched the shoreline. According to Hagen, Navy Tug 806, from Pearl Harbor greatly assisted with the fire fighting efforts. “We knocked it down, but they permanently extinguished the fire,” he said.

The Coast Guard Cutter Sweetbrier from Alaska, in town for training, was sent to help. It arrived only to see Kathleen sink. The fire had burned for nearly six hours devouring the \$350,000 56-foot fiberglass ship. The 17-year-old vessel sank in about 600 feet of water off Ewa Beach.



Left: Station Honolulu 41-footer speeds towards the Kathleen.

Above: The stern of the Kathleen moments before it sank in 600-foot of water.



Tae was treated and released. Muffly arrived at the hospital with second and third degree burns covering 90 percent of his body. He died the following day.

According to Lt. j.g. Rich Teubner, the investigating officer, Tae stated that he was on watch when a fireball engulfed the galley.

Everyone else was asleep inside a berthing area under the pilothouse. Tae said that he screamed and stomped on the deck trying to wake those underneath.

According to Tae's statement, Muffly appeared, bursting through the flames. Tae moved Muffly out of the way and doused the flames on his clothes. Nothing was seen or heard from the rest of the crew. Tae helped Muffly onto the collection of fishing floats and waited for help to arrive out of the darkness. 🚨

A Whale's Tale

By Lt. Matt Murtha
CGC Kiska

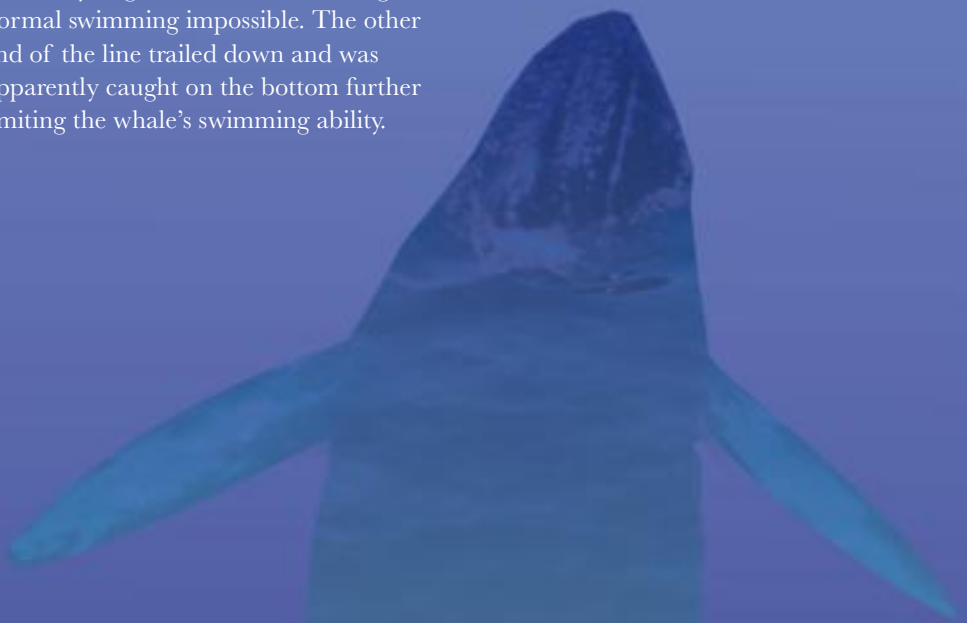
The Coast Guard, National Marine Fisheries Service and the Hawaii State Marine Patrol joined forces in early February, to rescue a 35- to 40-foot Humpback whale that was entangled six miles northwest of Waipio Valley.

After receiving reports of the foundering whale Feb. 6, Gene Nitta of the National Marine Fisheries Service departed for Hilo to coordinate the rescue. With the Coast Guard Cutter Kiska unavailable because of engine maintenance, a 22-foot vessel was provided by the SMP. Nitta and Kiska crewman Steve Lowry joined Marine Patrol Deputy Andy Ford for the 60 mile ocean transit to the position reported by tourist helicopters.

After 30 minutes in the area, the exhausted whale was spotted 250 yards off shore periodically bobbing to the surface for air. Upon close inspection, a 3/4 inch diameter synthetic line was seen wrapped tightly around the tail. The line then ran forward along each side of the whale and was wrapped around each pectoral fin. The entanglement had effectively hog-tied the whale, making normal swimming impossible. The other end of the line trailed down and was apparently caught on the bottom further limiting the whale's swimming ability.

For the next two hours the 3 officers worked to free the exhausted whale, all the while keeping an eye on two 8- to 10-foot tiger sharks that were circling the area. Eventually, Ford maneuvered the vessel close enough for Nitta and Lowry to reach the whale and the tangled lines with a 12-foot boat hook. The lines were then cut with a knife attached to the boat hook and the whale slowly swam away.

Nitta commented they were fortunate to reach the whale in time and although the whale was obviously stressed and exhausted by the incident, he expects the whale to fully recover. Nitta also praised the helicopter pilots for initially notifying the Coast Guard and asks that any incidents of marine mammals in distress be reported to NMFS or the Coast Guard so that the Hawaiian Marine Mammal Stranding Network can be alerted and appropriate action taken. 🚨





An HH-65A helicopter from Air Station Barbers Point hovers over the two Navy men after they were spotted by a C-130.

Their misery began early Saturday morning when the monstrous wave crashed into the small boat – not tipping it over – but nearly filling it with water. It was the second wave that finished the job.

With a coconut and two small bottles of water to sustain them for the next 48 hours, the two men clung to the slippery bottom of their capsized boat.

“Sitting on a boat is pure misery,” said Navy Master Chief Greg Foster. “It was hard to be comfortable; we were cold and miserable.”

Foster and fishing partner Navy Chief Roy Sokolowski were expecting to have a relaxing day of fishing off Barbers Point Oahu Feb. 24 when their world was turned upside down.

“We knew we were in big trouble, but we were only three miles from Barbers,” Foster said. “We thought we had a good chance of being rescued. But as the afternoon wore on, it became apparent that was not the case.”

They stayed on top of the 17-foot motorboat most of the first night in eight-to 10-foot seas.

They struggled to climb back on top of the slick hull when occasional waves would knock them off. They tried to remember stories and books they had read of others in similar circumstances. They tried to remember their Navy training, but their minds were also crowded with thoughts of friends and family back home.

Sokolowski’s wife became worried when the men didn’t return home Saturday night, she called friends who called the Coast Guard.

“At about 4 a.m. we saw a Coast Guard helicopter looking for us, but it was far away and still fairly dark,” Foster said. “Then later on that day, we saw a Coast Guard C-130. At least we knew they were looking for us.”

Foster and Sokolowski lost most of their supplies when the boat capsized. Their cooler with food



By PAI John Moss
Photos courtesy
Air Station Barbers Point

was trapped under the boat. They managed to pull the cooler out late in the afternoon on Sunday, but found gasoline had ruined everything but the two bottles of water. Toward dusk, though, the men spotted a coconut floating nearby.

"Roy swam out and got it," Foster said. "I never thought I'd be so happy to see a coconut. He cracked it on the bottom of the boat and then we both shucked it and ate it with a little more water and then settled down for the night."

By Monday morning, the men weren't sure if they could make another night. With waves knocking them off the hull, it was getting harder to climb back up. Their energy was drained and they had long since lost sight of land. It was then Foster noticed the Coast Guard C-130 airplane over Sokolowski's shoulder and started waving a red marker flag.

"It probably ranks up there with the happiest day of my life," Foster said.

The C-130 crew found them 55 miles west of Barbers Point and dropped a life raft with a radio and survival equipment to the two men. Forty-five minutes later two Dolphin helicopters were hovering overhead. They hoisted the men and returned them to Barbers Point where ambulances were waiting. The men and women at Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point cheered as Foster and Sokolowski emerged from the helicopters.

In all, a combined 82 hours were spent searching for the missing men adding together the efforts of Navy P-3 airplanes, Coast Guard C-130 airplanes and H-65 helicopters, the Coast Guard cutters Assateague and Point Evans, and Coast Guard Station Honolulu small boats.

Foster and Sokolowski were listed in satisfactory condition when they reached the hospital suffering from hypothermia, dehydration and exposure. They were released one week after their ordeal began.



Navy Master Chief Greg Foster is wheeled to a waiting ambulance after spending 48 hours in the open ocean.

Will to Survive

Capsized 3 miles
from shore

2 Bottles of water

1 Coconut

48 hours in the water

Rescued 55 miles
from shore

LIGHTS OUT ON *Lanai*

By Lt. Karen Jones
MSO Honolulu

Ahh ... a few minutes of free time and you're curled up with the a copy of your favorite novel ... oops - don't forget the light - don't want to hurt your eyes! What did you just take for granted in that scene? Sure, everyone you know can read, and no one ever takes free time for granted, but what about that glow above your head, reflecting off the pages, did you take that for granted?

The 3,000 residents of the Hawaiian island of

Lanai, probably did this past November, unaware that strong winds were creating an urgent situation in their backyard.

The tiny island of Lanai receives the diesel fuel for its generators from a tank barge that makes regular calls into the harbor of Kaumalapau. The barge ties up, hooks up, and delivers the fuel necessary to keep the electrical generating plant in business, making power. In one visit, the barge can fill the storage facility's tanks.

Kaumalapau Harbor is a small port on the southwest coast of Lanai. It is the only harbor on the island available to receive shipping services,

Kaumalapau Harbor on the southwest coast of Lanai.





Hawaii State Archives

The breakwater in Kaunapau Harbor has deteriorated over the years.

such as the inter-island barge services that bring containers of supplies to the island, and of course, the regular fuel delivery. The harbor is normally protected by a breakwater, but it has fallen into a state of disrepair. Normally this damaged breakwater does not present a problem. But during the winter months, Kona, or southerly winds, are frequent. When the wind blows like this, the harbor is afforded little protection from the storm surges created.

During these strong winds, the tank barge remains outside the harbor until it is safe to enter. The swells can be severe enough that if a barge is already in the harbor when the weather kicks up, the barge is bounced around at the pier like a cork. Several alternatives to this delivery system have been discussed by the state, local interests, the electric company, the carrier of the fuel, and MSO Honolulu.

The most obvious solution is to repair the breakwater, but that comes with a \$12 million price tag. Construction of a smaller barge to more safely make the transfer, using a tug to carry the fuel, building a larger storage tank that could hold enough fuel to last through the winter, and even weather restrictions on the harbor were discussed. No one had \$12 million, there are no vessels small enough to deliver the fuel that are certificated to do so, and any construction would not solve the immediate problem of getting fuel to the island while the Kona winds continued to hold the delivery barge off shore.

While alternatives were being considered, the fuel supply continued to dwindle.

Residents and tourists on Lanai continued to turn on lights, vacuum rugs, watch TV, and boot up computers blissfully unaware of the crisis.

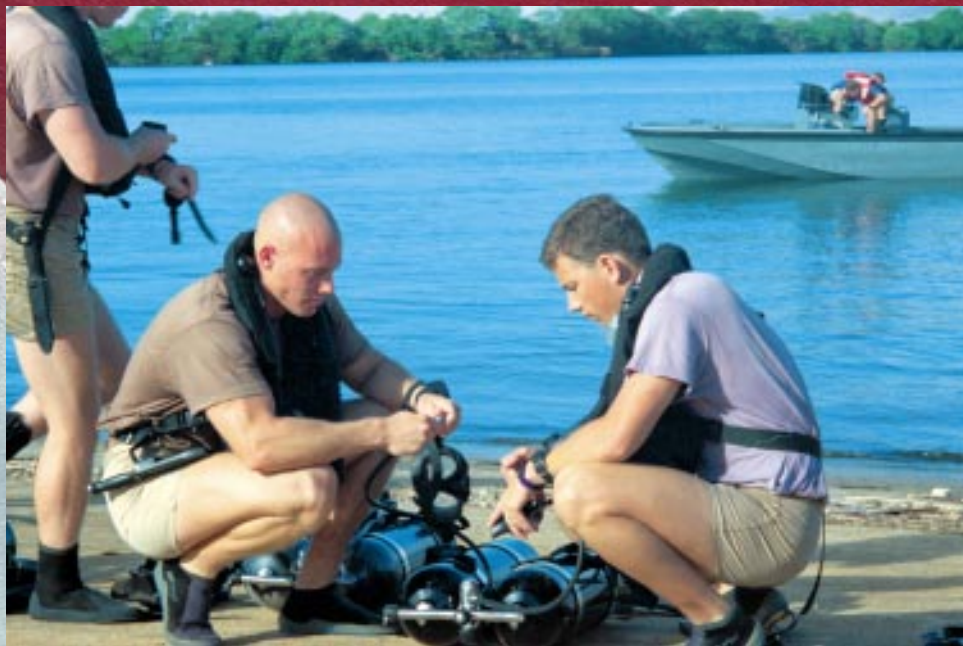
In November, the storage tanks for the power company were dangerously close to running out, and (Murphy being the prophet he is) the conditions in the harbor were too rough for the barge to enter. Chevron, the company who supplies the fuel, proposed the use of a recently certificated vessel, the American Islander, to supply the fuel. One problem - this vessel was only certificated to carry passengers. Carrying fuel as cargo would mean outfitting the vessel with a stream of additional equipment, and it would take weeks to complete a review of the plan for these new systems. The fuel for the power plant was anticipated to run out in less than one week.

Because of the urgency, Commanding Officer Marine Safety Office Honolulu, Capt. Samuel Burton, ordered that efforts be focused on reviewing the proposal to outfit the American Islander to carry fuel. In 14 hours, plans were reviewed, revised, and eventually approved. At 7 p.m. that day, an inspector from the MSO began the physical inspection of the additional firefighting, venting, piping, and other equipment necessary to safely carry fuel. The new cargo piping was pressure tested, and failed repeatedly.

Finally, at around 4 a.m. the next day, the piping was repaired, the inspection was complete, and there was another certificated fuel-carrying vessel in the Hawaiian Islands. The American Islander departed immediately after the inspection to load fuel, and began its voyage to Lanai, where someone, somewhere was turning off their electric alarm clock, and turning on a light to begin a new day.



Hawaii State Archives



All Wet and under pressure

By YN2 Andrew Gorman
Photos courtesy of Mallow

Navy qualified divers are on board the Coast Guard Cutter Mallow. No the Navy hasn't crossed over and given up the traditional rivalry. The Mallow sent three of its crew to a six-week Navy scuba course. SA Abraxas Layton, YN2 Andrew Gorman and HS2 Christopher Podratz on the Cutter Mallow completed the training and joined the community of 34 diver billets in the Coast Guard.

Mallow had two of six diver billets filled, but since dives require

four people on station, diving was impossible. So the Mallow tightened its belt and did without three of its crew for 40 days.

Mallow initially projected the need for three divers, but when one of the ship's current divers extended, the requirement dropped. "All three crew members qualified and earned the chance to go to school, so we sent them anyway" said Lt. Duke Walker, Mallow's Executive Officer. "You hope everyone is going to pass, but because of the attrition rate, it's always in the back of your mind that you may only get one or two making it through. That all three passed is definitely a big plus for the ship, and a real credit to our three men."

Of the last five candidates the Mallow sent to attend the course, only one completed the high risk training. Most dropped out because of difficulty with the physical requirements. "We were sending people over who weren't prepared," said Mallow's diving officer, Lt. j.g. Bion Stewart. "When we sent these three over, we made sure they knew what to expect."

Preparation included many practicing techniques in the pool, daily runs of four and five miles, and lots of push ups, pull ups and sit ups. This became more important as Naval Submarine Training Center forced the candidates to compete with 27 Navy sailors and Marines for the remaining 25 slots.

To get in they had to do well in the initial physical test: A 500 yard swim within 14 minutes, 43 push ups within two minutes, 50 sit ups within two minutes, six pull ups, and a mile and a half run in under 12 and a half minutes. Preparation



payed off, they passed, while six others had to drop out.

"The difficulty most sailors have with the training is that they are at sea and don't have a chance to get in the kind of shape required," said Director of Dive Training, Lt. David Davis, USN. When asked about the attrition rate Davis replied, "The attrition rate for scuba school is around 20% overall; it is difficult to say what the rate is for the Coast Guard because of the small number of Coast Guardsman that go through."

The six weeks consists of classes in diving medicine, scuba procedures, and dive physics as well as actual dives that begin in a pool, move on to pier side and end with boat dives to a depth of 130 feet. During training the instructors include plenty of physical training; affectionately known as "PT." PT begins every morning, rain or shine, hell or high water. Sprints around Ford Island, push ups, flutter kicks, eight count body builders, and many other calisthenics are used to help students become strong divers.

Safety is a primary concern during the course. At any time students have the option of stopping simply by saying "I quit." Also, if students don't understand what is going on, or feel that training is proceeding in an unsafe manner, they can call a training time out, and all training will stop.

Though the training is high risk, the instructors are alert to any problems the students might have to ensure their security. "Safety is of the utmost importance to all of the instructors here," said Instructor EM2 Troy Larck, USN.


Though difficult, all of the new divers agreed that the training was worth it. "I'm glad I was afforded the opportunity to go to dive training; it was one of the big reasons I came to Hawaii" said Podratz. "I wanted to be the corpsman on a 180' as well a member of the dive team." Asked how formidable the training was, Podratz replied, "There were times during the training where I wondered if I would finish it, but I would just think of what I would get to do after graduation. Also, having support from my family and from the command made things much easier."

Layton said, "The training was rigorous and challenging but having other Coasties in the class



made it easier. We all wanted to graduate together so it was like a wall behind you, pushing you to make it through."

Gorman said, "Being a Coast Guard diver is a very rare and unique opportunity; there are only a handful out there. There are really no other schools that our service has the chance to go to that are as physically demanding as the dive schools. I feel lucky that I had support from my wife, or school would have been ten times harder."

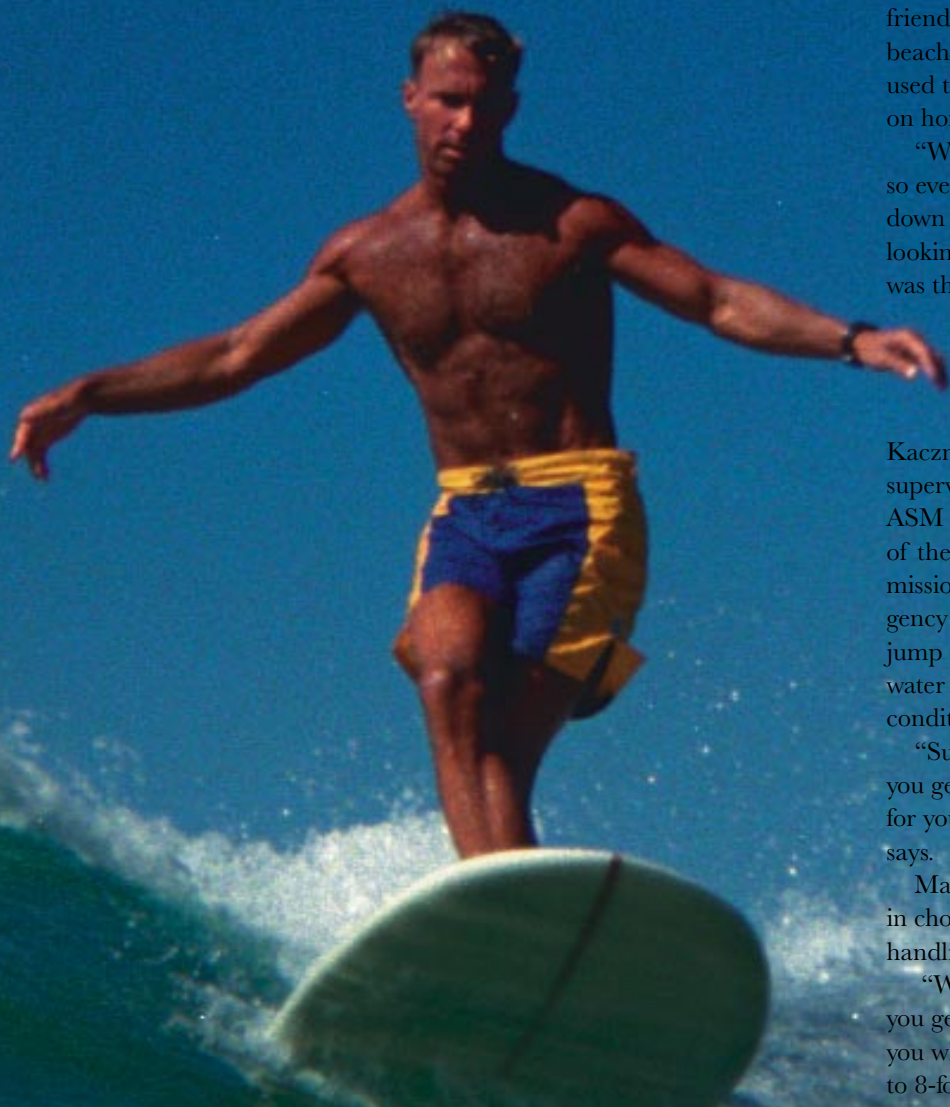
Now all three are authorized to wear the scuba pin; a breast insignia consisting of a wet suit hood, face mask and double hose regulator. This not only signifies that they have completed a tough and challenging course of instruction, but they are part of one of the smallest groups throughout the entire U.S. military. They are now Coast Guard Divers. 

Above: YN2 Gorman.

Top facing page: SA Layton and HS2 Podratz prepare gear before training

Bottom facing page: Dive pin earned by divers.

Surfing.
Shooting the tube.
Hangin ten.
What a radical, gnarly, tubular, bodacious,
mondo cool kinda thing.



You get to be the big kahuna – Right?
Not really.

“Surfing’s just really good exercise. It’s a way to escape from the pressures of life,” says Dennis Kaczmarek. “It’s an awesome feeling of freedom.”

As a chief aviation survivalman, Kaczmarek is the head rescue swimmer at Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point. He’s also a 20-year veteran surfer.

He began surfing when he was 13 years old, growing up in Dana Point, Calif. He and his friends taught themselves to surf, heading to the beach after school and on the weekends. They used to pull their surf boards behind their bikes on homemade trailers.

“We lived about a quarter mile from the beach, so every day we’d get off school and ride our bikes down to the beach with our boards on these funky looking trailers,” says Kaczmarek. He says surfing was the cool thing to do. “It was just a craze.

Everyone in Southern California wanted to surf.”

His sun-tanned skin and blond hair seem to fit the typical surfer mold, but Kaczmarek can’t be considered a beach bum. He supervises 13 other ASMs in one of the larger ASM shops in the Coast Guard. They maintain all of the station’s survival equipment and fly rescue missions both as rescue swimmers and as emergency medical technicians. They’re trained to jump from helicopters and pull people from the water under some of the most severe weather conditions.

“Surfing is perfect for rescue swimmers because you get beat up in the surf and that prepares you for your job in a hostile environment,” Kaczmarek says.

Many of his fellow rescue swimmers like to surf in choppy conditions to build their confidence for handling themselves out in the open ocean.

“When you go surfing on an 8- to 10-foot day, you get to know what to expect,” he says. “It helps you when you go out on a high seas rescue with 6- to 8-foot seas. You’ve seen something like it before.”

Riding on the crest of

By PAI John Moss

The largest waves he's surfed have been between 15 and 18 feet, but he prefers to stay with waves under 8 feet. He said surfing can be a dangerous sport if the proper precautions aren't taken, so he tries to play it safe.

"I know what my limits are and I think I have good common sense to know when to get out of the water. I don't think it would look very good in the papers to read 'Coast Guard rescue swimmer drowns'."

When out in large waves, a surfer runs the risk of being held under water as successive waves crash on top of them. Kaczmarek said the longest he's been held under water was close to a minute.

"I thought I was dead," Kaczmarek says. "I knew I was in trouble, so I tried to relax to keep from burning up more energy. I reverted to some helicopter inversion training we go through. With big waves, you can be held under a long time ... even a short time seems like a long time."

Kaczmarek has been a competitive surfer since 1981, taking part in more competitions than he can count and winning many along the way. In fact, he recently threw away all of his trophies because he didn't have room for them at home. He's been given free surf boards by manufacturers to promote their products and has had his name appear in national surfing magazines. He takes part in a competition about once every two months. He surfs with both long boards and short boards. However, with the new design changes to long boards that make them more maneuverable, he prefers to compete with them.

The Coast Guard has given Kaczmarek the opportunity to live near prime surf areas and to travel to other parts of the world. He's been to the Caribbean, Barbados, Baja California, mainland Mexico, Costa Rica, Fiji, Tahiti, Samoa and Pohnpei.

"I've traveled all over the place surfing different types of waves. Every wave is different."

But he says Hawaii is probably the premier place to surf.

"When we were growing up, everybody dreamed of surfing in Hawaii," he says. "We have a spot right out here in front of the station. It's one of the best spots on the island when it breaks. Not many people know about it or have access to it. We call it the Jetty. Most of the Coast Guard people who surf talk to each other and know about this spot. Puerto Rico has a spot called Wilderness and we have the Jetty."

Kaczmarek tries to surf about five days a week, preferring the north and west shores of Oahu. Being single, he says he can get out quiet often. He's also a lifeguard in his spare time which gives him an opportunity to get into the surf.

"I grew up around the water. If I got stuck someplace away from the water where I couldn't surf, I'd go crazy. It's part of my life."

He says some of his childhood friends envy his current lifestyle.

"The friends I grew up with went to college while I joined the Coast Guard. They're working 9-to-5 jobs. Now when we get together, they say they wished they had done what I did."

Kaczmarek says the Coast Guard was a good choice for him. It helped him reach a goal to be part of a rescue organization while staying close to the water.

"I planned to only stay for four years and get out," he says. "But I like it so much, I don't know what I'd do now if I had to get out."

out." 



PA1 John Moss

Dennis M. Kaczmarek

33 years old

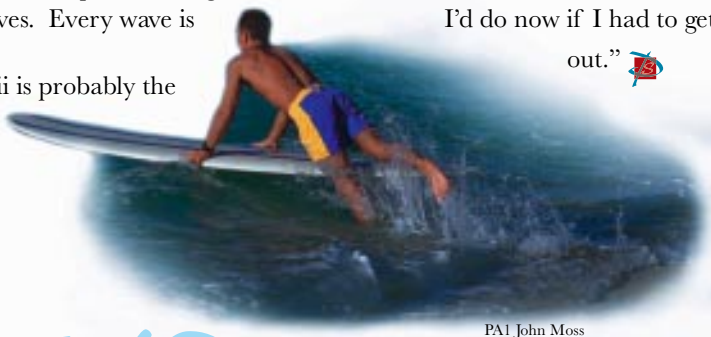
12 years
Coast Guard service

Cutter Sassafras,
Honolulu 1983-1985

Air Station Barbers Point,
Hawaii 1985-1988

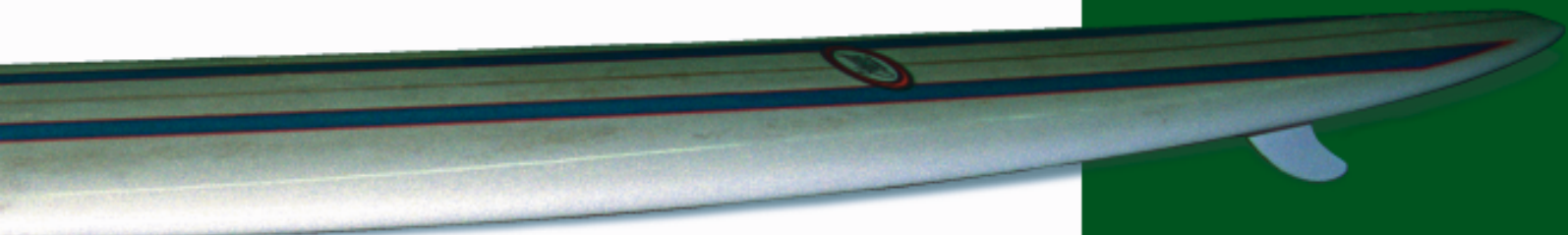
Air Station San Diego,
California 1988-1992

Air Station Barbers Point,
Hawaii 1992-present



PA1 John Moss

a wave





On-scene-Rescue class at Mitsko Beach Pohnpei.

Micronesia

Islands of hope

By Lt. Angus MacFeeley

By turning over some of its operations in the western Pacific to the local governments, the Coast Guard is helping thinly-spread island nations attain self-sufficiency.

The Coast Guard's first order of business was to pass control and care of nearby aids to navigation to the nations themselves, a process of training and supplying that ended in May.

As a next step, key officials from the Federated States of Micronesia gathered in Guam in Febru-

ary 1995 for a conference on search and rescue and law enforcement.

The Coast Guard and the Micronesian representatives developed national search and rescue plans and a SAR training program.

After several months of planning, the Micronesian Training Program, funded by the U.S. Department of the Interior, brought an intensive and customized two-week training program to Micronesia's capital on the island of Pohnpei.

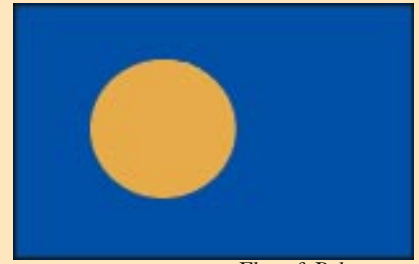
"Our goal is to make them as self sufficient as possible in terms of maritime safety, law enforcement, and search & rescue"

- U.S. Coast Guard International Strategic Plan for the former Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands.



Flag of Micronesia

5 countries, 40 students, 12 instructors



Flag of Palau

The session involved 12 instructors and 40 students from five countries, with search and rescue training in program management, mission coordination, rescue aviation and on-scene rescue techniques.

Among the instructors were the US Pacific commander's Coast Guard liaison, Capt. James Perry, and other Coast Guard members from the National Search and Rescue School in Yorktown, Va., and throughout the Pacific. Representatives from the US Army and the Aquatics Division of the County of Hawaii also taught.

Western Pacific World of water

Micronesia's hundreds of tiny islands would make up a total land mass smaller than Rhode Island, yet they are strewn across an area of ocean larger than the continental United States. Until recently, it, along with the Republic of Palau and the Marshall Islands, was administered as part of the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands by the United States. The territory was created in the early 1950's by a United Nations mandate. Micronesia began in 1987 to knit together its isolated and diverse cultures and strive for political self-determination. The last of the former trust territories, Palau, celebrated its first anniversary of independence on Oct. 1.

reef rescues

Operational training focused on two general scenarios: a small boat adrift at sea or a boat with injured people stranded on an outlying barrier reef. Most of the students for this portion of the training were police officers, and in the end they were qualified as lifeguard instructors by the standards of the American Red Cross.

Reef rescues are common in Micronesia, but relatively uncommon elsewhere. The inhabited islands of the nation are surrounded by dangerous barrier reefs. The U.S. Army fire chief on Kwajalein Atoll, Ragnar Opiniano, taught rescuers how to read waves as they build and break on reefs, and the best approaches to reach the injured.

In a simulation on the last day of training, the students were asked to save a victim with a broken back from Kepara Island, located on the southwest corner of Pohnpei's barrier reef. Mark Marshall, the deputy director of the County of Hawaii's Aquatics Division, led the on-scene rescue training team with the help of ASMC Dennis Kaczmarek from Air Station Barbers Point.



Flag of the Marshall Islands



On Scene Rescue Class practices first aid

Search planning

A group of pilots from airlines in the Pacific received training in flight planning and search patterns from Lt. George "Skip" Deacon, also from Barbers Point. The pilots had been called upon many times to help in search and rescue cases, but had never received the intensive and specialized training.

Sixteen Micronesian and five Australian students received mission coordinator training. They learned how to make search plans manually, as well as general concepts of search and rescue. They got the same training on Pohnpei as they would have received at the National Search and Rescue School.

The Australian officers used their practical experience to help the other students with assignments and group exercises. In the end, students were able to plan primary and secondary searches around Pohnpei, and had begun to develop mission coordination skills for their home islands.

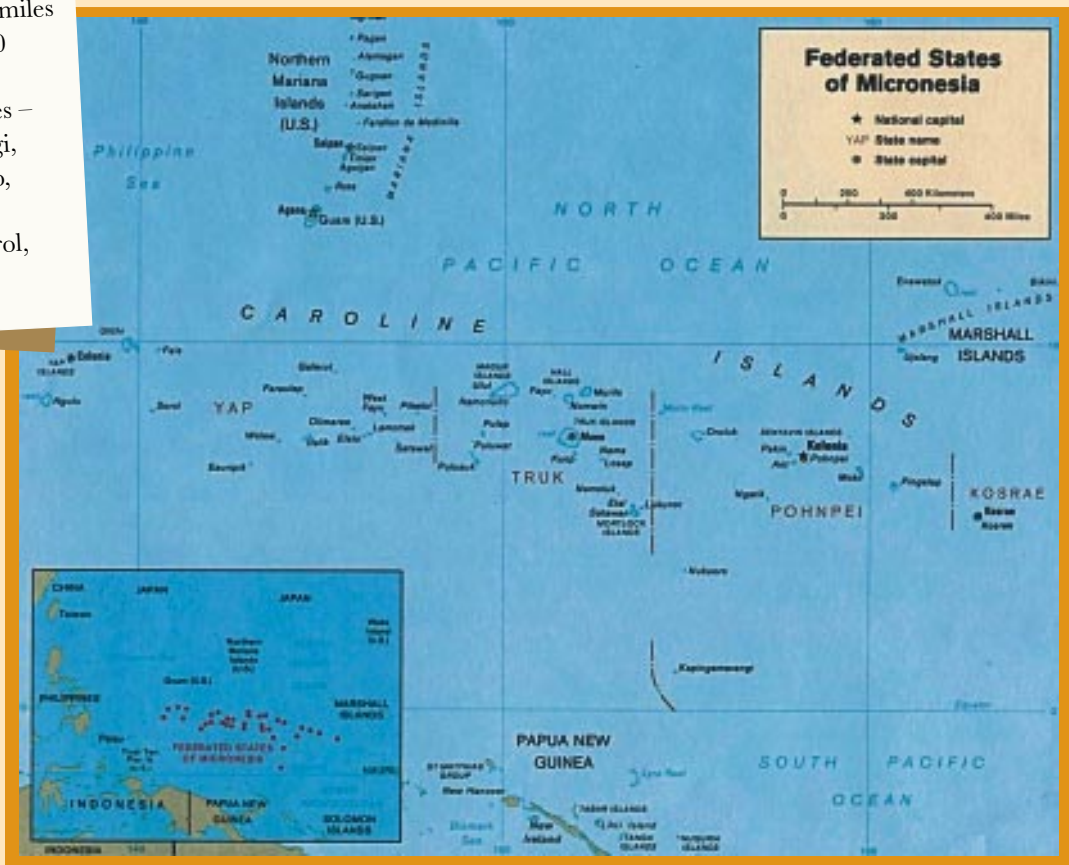
Micronesia

Federated States of Micronesia – Formerly part of Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. States – Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap.
607 islands comprising 300 square miles of land, spread over a million square miles of ocean. Total Population – 122,000
Capital – Kolonia, population 6,169
Religion – Christian, 97% Languages – Carolinian, English, Kapingamarangi, Kusaie, Mokil, Mortlock, Namonuito, Ngatik, Nukuoro, Paafang, Pingelap, Ponapean, Puluwat, Satawal, Sonsorol, Truk, Ulithi, Woleaian, Yapese.

This training is a stepping stone to better cooperation for future search and rescue cases. The people of the Marshall Islands, Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia should gain comfort from knowing that if they are in distress, the skills to help are close at hand.



Phillip Maluweiram Captain of the Patrol Boat Micronesia





People making what ought to be, what is

These articles were compiled by MCPO Billy Joe Whitley from units as examples of leadership in the district. If you have notable stories you'd like to see published, please send them via e-mail to dcea/D14d.

CCGD14

Better sponsors = better transfers

CWO3 Peter Lucyga has developed a sponsor training program. As the district relocation manager, he recognized all the information packets in the world will not help inbound personnel relocate unless they have an active and interested sponsor. Many sponsors lack basic knowledge of what constitutes sponsorship. Lucyga is trying to improve that through training and standardized sponsor guidelines. This will help people fulfill their responsibilities to their fellow service members, getting them off on the right foot. Nobody told him to do it. He simply saw a problem and took action to fix it. That's leadership.

USCGC Sassafra

Top notch yeoman eases transfers

YN2 Don Ralston is a man who's "made what ought to be, what is" aboard Sassafra. As independent duty yeoman, he's assisted dozens of members, late at night and on weekends to ensure smooth TAD travel and PCS transfers. Even when deployed, Ralston has coordinated the travel arrangements, travel claim reimbursements, and sponsoring details necessary for overseas moves. In addition, he has assisted senior personnel with award recommendations, page sevens, and other correspondence to ensure the crew is properly recognized for their achievements. On top of his normal duties, Ralston quickly qualified in damage control watchstations, senior petty of the watch duties, and underway quartermaster of the watch. Ralston is a superior petty officer, excellent yeoman, and fine shipmate for the crew of Sassafra.

USCGC Sassafra

Clean sweep during recent training

The officers and crew of Cutter Sassafra "manned their broom's" in a different sense recently, for a clean sweep of tailored ship's training availability operations. This is the cutter's seventh sweep in ten years. The highest scores were obtained in the areas of communications and engineering with a 98.8 and a 97.7, respectively. Navigation/Seamanship and Damage Control earned a 96 and 95.8, respectively. Perhaps more important than the clean sweep and earning the Coast Guard "E" Ribbon award is the resulting greater proficiency with which cutter and crew is now able to do its job.



PA2 Scott Epperson

Tradition on deck ... The names and birthdates of Aaron G. Lavarnway and Kalani R. Danes were engraved in CGC Washington's ship's bell as part of a christening ceremony aboard Washington March 2, at Sand Island in Honolulu. MKC William and Sheena Lavarnway and EM1 Roque and Karmary Danes requested Tom O'Donnell of the Hawaiian Biblical Research Fellowship to preside over the ceremony.

Reserves come through for MSO

By Lt. Kevin Pratt

Reservists assigned to Marine Safety Office Honolulu have played a key role in the Fishing Vessel Safety Program and in Marine Investigations. Reservists working in the Fishing Vessel Safety Program on the Big Island and Oahu have issued 49 safety decals, conducted 126 fishing vessel safety exams, and educated 613 customers since last May. Reserve Examiners' local geographic knowledge and acceptance by the close-knit, culturally diverse Hawaiian fishing community have helped make this program extremely successful. Reservists have also made significant contributions in Marine Investigations. Three reservists have appeared before an administrative law judge to present Coast Guard cases in suspension and revocation

proceedings against licensed and documented mariners. One reservist has completed the Marine Investigation Officer course and has served as lead investigator at a suspension and revocation proceeding. MSO Honolulu has significantly increased the role of reservists since integrating them into their command last March. As a result of the integration, MSO Honolulu was able to plan and execute an ambitious training program designed to produce a force of fully trained reservists capable of responding to a variety of missions on all of the major Hawaiian Islands. The outstanding partnership of active duty and reserve resources created at MSO Honolulu demonstrates "Team Coast Guard" works.

**Department of Transportation
United States Coast Guard**

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14th Coast Guard District
300 Ala Moana Blvd.
Honolulu HI, 96850-4982



Next Port of Call

Coast Guard Inspectors in the Far East?

*Lt. Nick Caron inspects the inside of a boiler on the
U.S. Naval Service Ship American Osprey in Singapore.
(photo by PA2 Scott Epperson)*